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To:	Cline, Richard A
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Fox&Hounds discusses and explains the confluence of politics and business in California through our blog, featuring opinion pieces written by leaders from across the state published daily. Read below to see what's new on the site today.

Democrats See Opportunity in California
By Darry Sragow and Rob Pyers

Despite being in office for less than 100 days, there is anecdotal evidence that the Trump Administration has fueled a surge in progressive enthusiasm across the country. The CA34 special election last Tuesday marked the first Congressional Special Election scheduled during the Trump Presidency. While Republicans make up 9.33% of that district's registered voters, and while they weren't going to turn out expecting to win, the lone GOP candidate in the 23-person field could only muster 3.35% of the vote, finishing in 9th place behind seven Democrats and one Green Party candidate. This dismal performance stands in contrast to even the 10.72% share that Donald Trump received in November. The GOP share of the electorate in Tuesday's contest is on track to be the lowest for any election in the era of the Top Two primary where a non-write in Republican was on the ballot.

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Book review: Recovering institutional memory
By Loren Kaye

Assemblyman Willard M. Huyck served two terms in the Legislature shortly after the end of the Second World War. Though little-remembered today, Mr. Huyck is still alive – the only surviving member of the 1940s-era Legislature, a living link to the reigns of Governor Earl Warren and lobbyist Artie Samish.
Also in the 1940s, as women across the country stepped into traditionally male jobs to replace the men who went to war, the state Legislature included but a single woman in its entire membership: Assemblywoman Eleanor Miller early in the decade, succeeded by Kathryn Niehouse, who served for five terms as the sole female in the Legislature until 1953. Not for another twenty-five years would women account for more than five seats of the 120 members of the Senate and Assembly.

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The cost of California's public pensions is breaking the bank. Here's one reason this problem is so hard to fix
By Judy Lin

More than 20 times in the last 15 years, political leaders looking to control California's fast-growing public pension costs have tried to put reform initiatives before the voters.
None of the proposals has made it onto the ballot.
Often, advocates could not raise enough money for signature gathering, advertising and other costs of an initiative campaign. Some of the most promising efforts, however, ran into a different kind of obstacle: an official summary, written by the state attorney general, that described the initiative in terms likely to alienate voters. Facing bleak prospects at the polls, the sponsors abandoned the campaigns.

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The Other California: A Flyover State Within a State
By Joel Kotkin

California may never secede, or divide into different states, but it has effectively split into entities that could not be more different. On one side is the much-celebrated, post-industrial, coastal California, beneficiary of both the Tech Boom 2.0 and a relentlessly inflating property market. The other California, located in the state's interior, is still tied to basic industries like homebuilding, manufacturing, energy and agriculture. It is populated largely by working- and middle-class people who, overall, earn roughly half that of those on the coast.
Over the past decade or two, interior California has lost virtually all influence, as Silicon Valley and Bay Area progressives have come to dominate both state politics and state policy. "We don't have seats at the table," laments Richard Chapman, president and CEO of the Kern Economic Development Corporation. "We are a flyover state within a state."

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